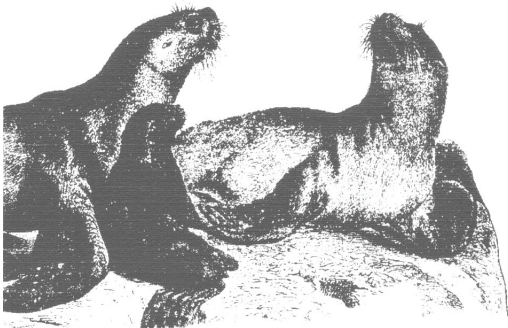


Reasonable and Prudent Alternative (RPA) Committee

A progress report to the
North Pacific Fishery Management Council
April 2001

Larry Cotter, chair

Dave Witherell, staff



RPA Committee Members

- Larry Cotter (chair)
- Dave Benson
- Shane Capron
- Doug DeMaster
- John Guavin
- Terry Leitzell
- Alan Parks
- Beth Stewart
- Jack Tagart
- Sue Hills
- Wayne Donaldson
- John Winther
- Bob Small
- Fred Robison
- Gearald Leape
- Jerry Bongen
- John Iani
- Matt Moir
- Dave Cline
- Steve Drage
- Tony DeGange

Background

- In February, the Council tasks the Committee to:
 - To make recommendations on open/closed areas 2001.
 - Council direction: give consideration to small boat concerns in development of open/closed areas; such measures should be developed in a ‘non-allocative’ manner.
 - To develop RPA alternative and experimental design for 2002 amendment package for June meeting.

Goals and Objectives

- Goal: Develop an RPA that meets the mandates of the ESA, MSFCMA, and other applicable laws, while conserving marine biodiversity and sustaining viability of the diverse fishing communities dependent upon the Alaska fishery resources.
- Objectives:
 - Remove jeopardy and adverse modification.
 - Develop a sound experimental design for monitoring.
 - Minimize social and economic impacts.
 - Minimize bycatch of PSC and other groundfish.
 - Promote safety at sea.

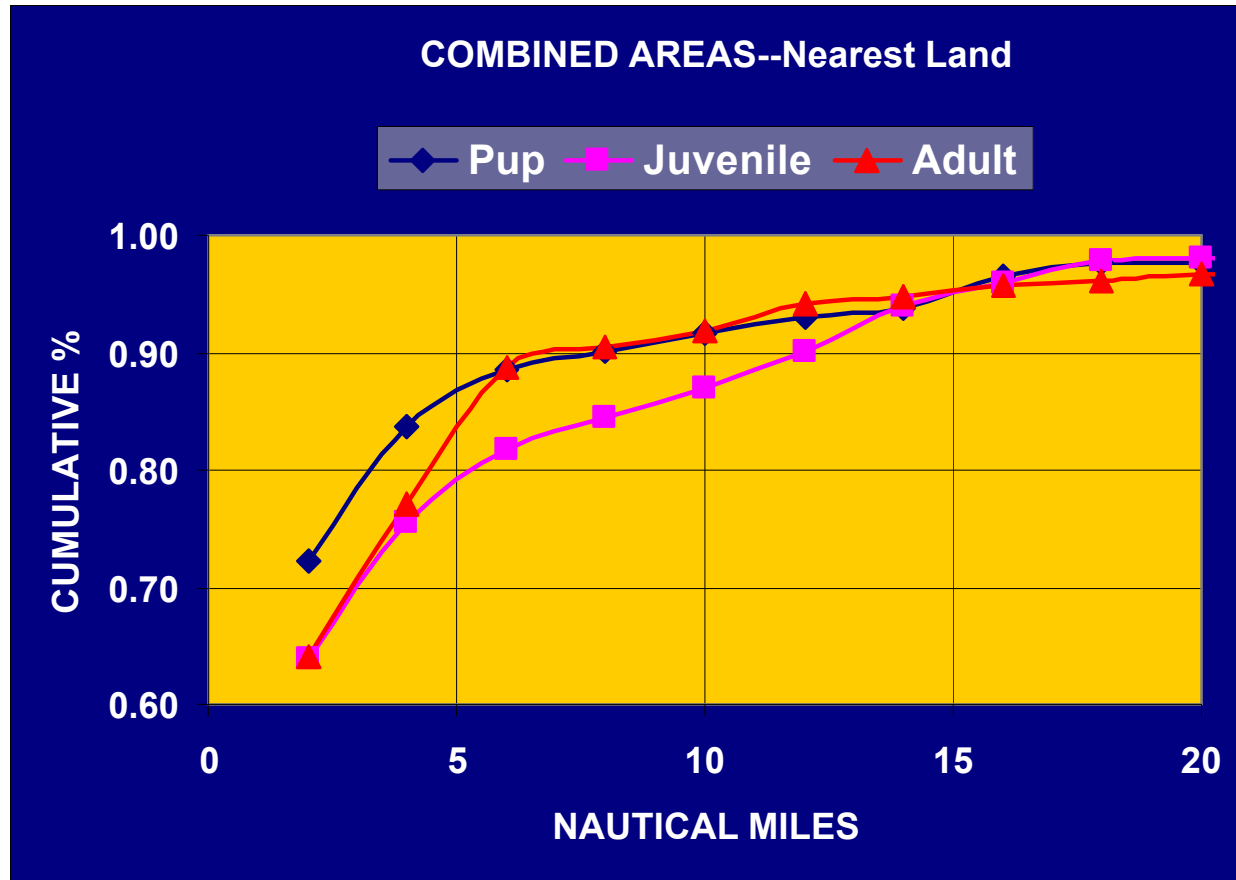
Meetings To Date

- February 10: meeting schedule, initial data requests.
- February 20: ESA, NEPA; refined data request.
- March 6-7: goals & objectives, jeopardy & adverse modification criteria, killer whale abundance studies, scat studies, SSL biology, NMFS surveys, ASSLRT report.
- March 25-29: MSFCMA, Kodiak prey studies, satellite telemetry data, GIS catch/survey/count data analysis, developed final recommendation for 2001.

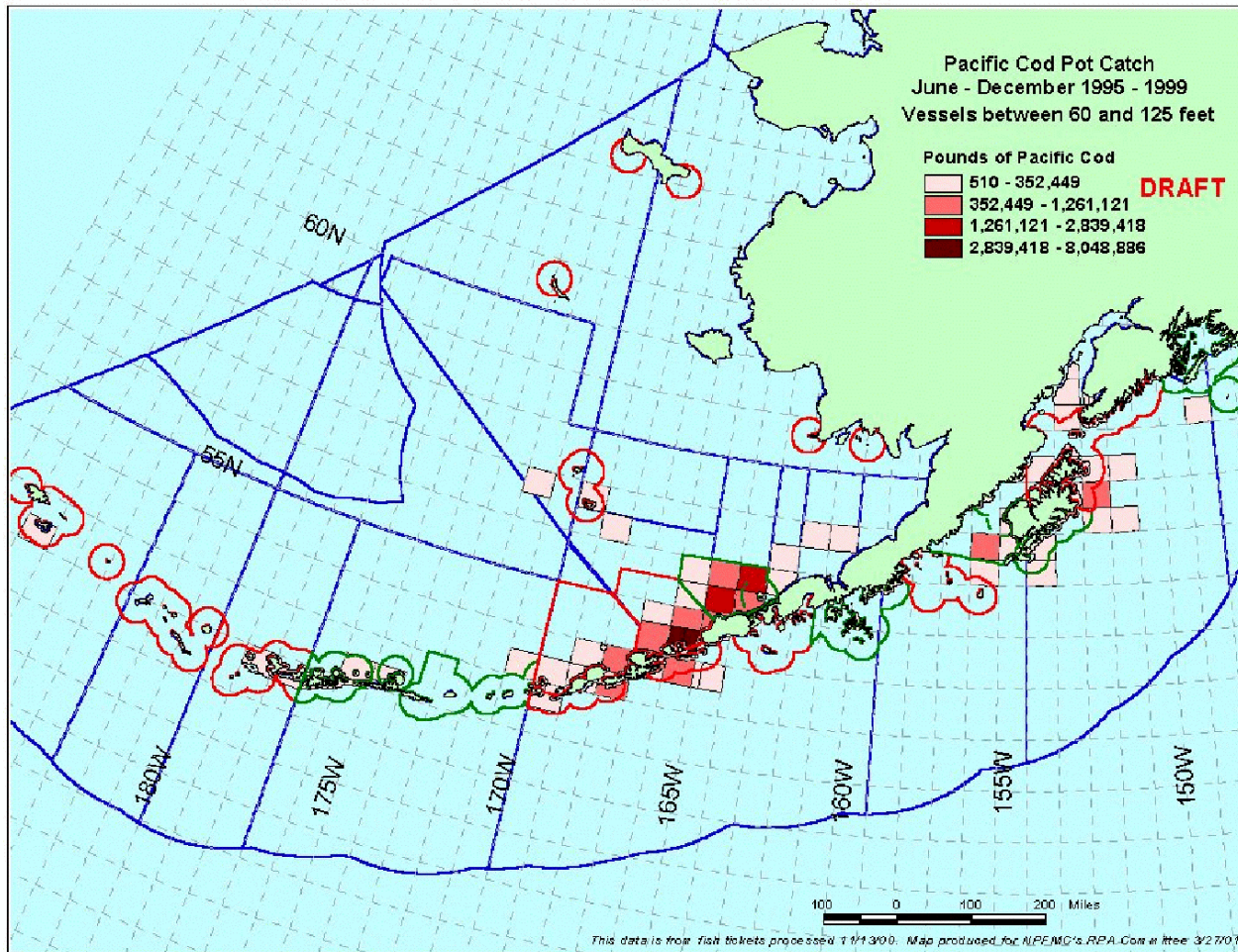
Analyses Undertaken for Committee

- Satellite Telemetry Data Summary
 - distance from shore and marking location
- Geographic Information System (GIS) Maps:
 - catch by gear type and vessel size
 - NMFS trawl survey data by ADF&G statistical area
 - SSL counts, rookeries and haulouts
 - SSL trends by region (metapopulation analysis)
 - Platform of opportunity data (sightings of SSL)
 - Vessel safety data (locations of accidents)
- 1999 Ex-vessel and Product Value Data
 - by area, vessel length group and gear type

Summary of Satellite Data



Example Map of GIS data



ESA Mandates

- ESA requires that each Federal agency insure that any Federal action is not likely to: (1) jeopardize the continued existence of any listed species OR (2) result in the destruction or adverse modification of critical habitat of such species.
 - Jeopardize the continued existence of means to engage in an action that reasonably would be expected, directly or indirectly, to reduce appreciably the likelihood of both the survival and recovery of a listed species in the wild by reducing the reproduction, numbers, or distribution of that species.
 - Destruction or adverse modification means a direct or indirect alternation that appreciably diminishes the value of critical habitat for both the survival and recovery of a listed species. Such alterations include, but are not limited to, alterations adversely modifying any of those physical or biological features that were the basis for determining the habitat to be critical.

MSFCMA Mandates

■ 10 National Standards

- Prevent overfishing and achieve OY, Best scientific information, stock unit management, non-discriminatory, efficiency, variability, minimize costs, fishing communities, reduce bycatch, promote safety.

■ Required Contents of FMPS

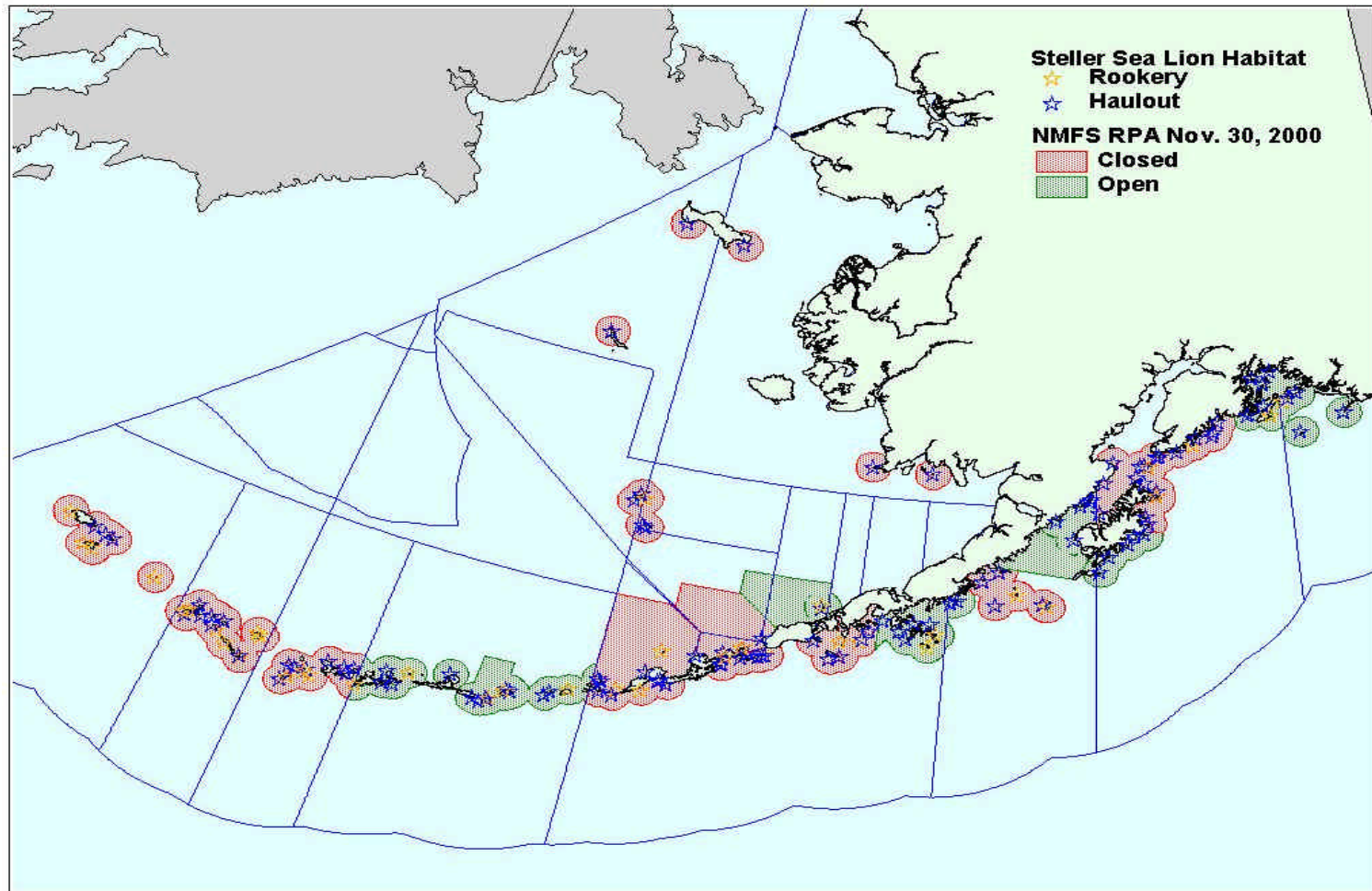
■ Provisions of Public Law 106-554

- BiOp RPA to be phased in 2001, and implemented in 2002, but revised as necessary based on independent scientific review and other new information.
- Council transmits FMP amendment to implement RPA.

RPA Criteria

- at least 50% of CH should be closed to fishing for pollock, cod, and mackerel;
- closures should protect at least 50% of the non-pup population and at least 75% of pups;
- measures should avoid jeopardy (assumes fishery causes decline);
- a monitoring program must be included (2002 and beyond).

Map of BiOp RPA



Committee Recommendations

- Change season opening dates
 - GOA: change cod to Sept 1 (all gears)
 - BS: change cod longline to Aug 15, and pot to Sept 1, and pollock to June 11.
 - AI: change cod longline to Aug 15, mackerel to Sept 1
- Modify RPA area closures
 - based on NMFS recommendation, using BiOp RPA numbered areas for changes.
- Coordinate efforts with State for 0-3 nm

[illegible]

Summary of RPA Protection

| <u>Criteria</u> | <u>BiOp</u> | <u>Committee</u> |
|-----------------------|-------------|------------------|
| <u>≥ 50% CH</u> | 66% | 57% |
| <u>≥ 50% non-pups</u> | 56% | 80% |
| <u>≥ 75% pups</u> | 74% | 80% |

Upcoming Meeting Schedule

- April 17-19 in Anchorage (tentative)
 - at the Holiday Inn, starting at 8 am
- May 9-11 in Juneau
 - at the NMFS Conference Room, starting at 10 am
- May 21-24 in Seattle
 - at the AFSC Building 4, starting at 1 pm